

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSO-00

NSCE-00 CCO-00 /055 W

----- 031590

P R 150917Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0156

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 6442

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, CB, US

SUBJ: JAPANESE REACTION TO MAYAGUEZ

1. JAPANESE MEDIA REPORTED IN FULL DETAIL EVENTS CONNECTED WITH SEIZURE BY CAMBODIANS OF MERCHANT SHIP MAYAGUEZ. VIEWS OF INDIVIDUAL US CONGRESSMEN ALSO REPORTED. ONLY PUBLIC COMMENTARY THUS FAR WAS BY NHK (TV) COMMENTATOR WHO SAID ONE REASON FOR SWIFT US ACTION WAS US SITUATION SHAPED BY LOSS OF PRESTIGE IN ASIA FOLLOWING DEFEATS IN CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM. NHK SAID PRES FORD'S POPULARITY WOULD HAVE SUNK IF HE HAD NOT TAKEN STRONG MEASURES.

2. THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL GOJ STATEMENT ON US ACTION. HOWEVER, IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, FIRST SE ASIA DIVDIR HANABUSA COMENTED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD DOMESTIC PSYCHOLOGICAL ATMOSPHERE WHICH IMPELLED US ACTION, BUT HE WISHED WE COULD HAVE WAITED A DAY OR TWO MORE TO ALLOW MORE TIME FOR ATTEMPTS AT DIMPLOMATIC SOLUTION. GREATER US PATIENCE
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WOULD HAVE WON MORE RESPECT FOR US.

3. JCP PLANS STRONG PROTEST AGAINST US, ESPECIALLY CONCERNING USE OF MARINES FROM OKINAWA FOR ACTION AGAINST CAMBODIANS. TWO COMMUNIST GROUPS HAVE PROTESTED AT EMBASSY. JSP IS EXPECTED TO BRING "PRIOR CONSULTATION" QUESTION UP IN DIET MAY 16.

4. COMMENT: DESPITE HANABUSA'S COMMENT AND HEAVY CRITICISM WE ARE SURE TO GET FROM JAPAN'S LEFT, WE BELIEVE THERE WILL BE SUBSTANTIAL ELEMENT OF JAPANESE PUBLIC WHO WILL AT LEAST "UNDERSTAND" DECISIVE US ACTION. IN ANY CASE, ISSUE WILL PASS RAPIDLY.
HODGSON

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NNN

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